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IN THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-21 (canceled)

22. (currently amended) A strip coating installation having a vacuum chamber which has, between a rear wall and at least one removable closing plate, a casing with a flat top, wherein at least one guide roller, a coating roller with an axis (A), and at least one coating source are positioned inside the vacuum chamber; wherein

ends of the at least one guide roller and of the coating roller that face toward the removable closing plate are attached by supporting elements and bearings directly to the top, and wherein a space in the vacuum chamber beneath the coating roller is free of the supporting elements.

23. (previously presented) A strip coating installation as in claim 22, wherein the at least one guide roller and the coating roller are mounted at the ends that face away from the closing plate on bearings on the rear wall.

24. (previously presented) A strip coating installation as in claim 22, wherein the at least one guide roller and the coating roller are, at the ends that face away from the closing plate, mounted on bearings on the supporting elements in front of the rear wall and held on the top.

25. (previously presented) A strip coating installation as in claim 22, wherein the space beneath the coating roller and at the side of the coating roller is divided by partitions into at least two chamber sections, and wherein the partitions have sealing elements at ends that face towards the coating roller, wherein the curvature of the sealing elements is configured to fit the radius of the coating roller in such a manner that curved sealing gaps are formed between the sealing elements and the coating roller.

26. (previously presented) A strip coating installation as in claim 25, wherein each of the sealing elements is connected to an accompanying partition by an adjustment mechanism such that the sealing gaps can be adjusted to a smallest possible size in a radial direction.

27. (previously presented) A strip coating installation as in claim 22, wherein, inside the vacuum chamber at least four chamber sections are formed on a circumference of the coating roller with partitions.

28. (previously presented) A strip coating installation as in claim 22, wherein two uppermost partitions enclose an angle of between 120 and 180 degrees downwards in relation to the axis (A).

29. (previously presented) A strip coating installation as in claim 22, wherein a circumferential section of the casing that is beneath the two uppermost partitions is in the shape of a part-cylinder.

30. (previously presented) A strip coating installation as in claim 29, wherein a total of four guide rollers are positioned in a chamber above two uppermost partitions.

31. (previously presented) A strip coating installation as in claim 22, wherein partitions have, at ends that face away from the rear wall, radial sealing strips against which the closing plate can be brought to rest.

32. (previously presented) A strip coating installation as in claim 31, wherein the sealing strips have elastomeric sealing edges that run parallel to radial center lines thereof, against which edges the closing plate can be brought to rest when vacuum chamber is closed.

33. (previously presented) A strip coating installation as in claim 32, wherein the coating roller has an end face that faces towards the closing plate, in front of which end face is

positioned a fixed ring sector which encloses the lower end of the supporting element for the coating roller around part of a circumference thereof.

34. (currently amended) A strip coating installation as in claim 22, wherein the coating roller is surrounded at ends thereof, inside chamber ~~sections, by sections~~, by strip-shaped screens that are curved cylindrically and coaxially, which screens enclose said ends with narrow gaps and shield the coating roller from being coated on surfaces thereof that are not covered by the strip.

35. (previously presented) A strip coating installation as in claim 34, wherein a screen is a front screen having an elastomeric sealing edge against which the closing plate can be brought to rest when the vacuum chamber is closed.

36. (previously presented) A strip coating installation as in claim 34, having a ring sector extends over the circumference as far as its end edges inside the front screen.

37. (previously presented) A strip coating installation as in claim 22, wherein an overall height of the installation, measured from the surface on which it is mounted, is a maximum of 2.5 meters.

38. (previously presented) A strip coating installation as in claim 22, wherein the vacuum chamber has, on each of two sides of the coating roller, a side chamber, wherein in each of the side chambers are positioned a winding spindle for an off-winding roller and a take-up roller respectively, and accompanying guide rollers for a strip.

39. (previously presented) A strip coating installation as in claim 32, wherein the side chambers are in the form of vacuum chambers and are linked to the chamber section of the vacuum chamber by means of slot-shaped gaps for the strip to pass through.

40. (previously presented) A strip coating installation as in claim 22, wherein the installation has chamber sections and side chambers, wherein each of the chamber sections of the vacuum chamber and side chambers is connected to a vacuum pump of its own.

41. (previously presented) A strip coating installation as in claim 38, wherein top surfaces of the side chambers are at least substantially positioned at a same height as a top of the vacuum chamber.